

The Soviets could indeed be counted on to remember those two attacks vividly. From August 6, 1945 on, they had believed, with good reason, that these first uses of atomic weapons had been aimed for purposes of intimidation at themselves as much as at the Japanese. And beyond this, they also knew better than most a good deal about subsequent past uses of U.S. nuclear weapons. What Dyess might have mentioned (but almost surely did not know) was that;

*Wep*

In the thirty-five years since Hiroshima, every president from Truman to Carter had felt compelled to consider or direct serious preparations for possible imminent U.S. initiation of tactical or strategic nuclear warfare, in the midst of an ongoing, intense, non-nuclear conflict or crisis. With the exception of the Cuban Missile Crisis, all of these instances had involved planning for initiation of nuclear war by the United States, as in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and as contemplated in the Persian Gulf. And several of those instances—as internal planning, discussion and preparations makes clear—had involved presidential threats that were no more bluffs than Truman's warning of "a rain of ruin" at Potsdam in 1945.

*Conclusions*

The Soviets know this, unlike the American public, because they were made to know it—often by explicit threats from the Oval Office, even when White House considerations of use of nuclear weapons was secret from other audiences—since they or their allies or client states were the intended targets of these preparations and warnings.

Moreover, the Soviets recall that the U.S. Strategic Air Command was established in early 1946 with the function of delivering nuclear attacks upon Russia when so directed, at a time when it was publicly proclaimed by the president and high military that the Soviet Union was not expected to possess operational nuclear weapon systems for a decade or longer. SAC's *only* mission in that initial period—which included the formation of NATO—was to threaten or carry out a U.S. first strike against the Soviet Union (possibly to protect Middle East oil, as well as Berlin and West Europe). It was not at all to deter or retaliate for a nuclear attack on the United States or anywhere else, which was not then a physical possibility.

#### APPENDIX I

It is not the Russians but the rest of us who need to learn these hidden realities of the nuclear dimension to U.S. foreign policy. As important background for the discussion that follows and for much else, here, briefly listed, are most of the actual nuclear crises that can now be documented from memoirs or other public sources, ~~in most cases after usually~~ <sup>above</sup> years or decades of secrecy: (footnotes indicate the most accessible references):

*which usually present contain  
other references to primary sources*

1. Truman's deployment of B-29s, officially described as "atomic-capable," to bases in Britain and Germany at the outset of the Berlin Blockade, June 1948.<sup>1</sup>
2. Truman's press conference warning that nuclear weapons were under consideration, the day after marines were surrounded by Chinese Communist troops at the Chosin Reservoir, Korea, November 30, 1950.<sup>2</sup>

3. • Eisenhower's secret nuclear threats against China, to force and maintain a settlement in Korea, 1953.<sup>3</sup>

4. • Secretary of State Dulles' secret offer to Prime Minister Bidault of three tactical nuclear weapons in 1954 to relieve the French troops besieged by the Indochinese at Dienbienphu.<sup>4</sup>

5. Internal agreement under Eisenhower and Dulles during the first Quemoy crisis, September 1954-April 1955 that nuclear weapons would be necessary as a last resort to defend the Offshore Islands, communicated to the Chinese by numerous states and moves that led, in Dulles' opinion, to the negotiated resolution of the crisis.<sup>3</sup>

6. "Diplomatic use of the Bomb" (Nixon's description) to deter Soviet unilateral action against the British and French in the Suez crisis, 1956.<sup>4</sup>

7. • Eisenhower's secret directive to the Joint Chiefs during the "Lebanon Crisis" in 1958 to prepare to use nuclear weapons, if necessary, to prevent an Iraqi move into the oilfields of Kuwait.<sup>5</sup>

8. • Eisenhower's secret directive to the Joint Chiefs in 1958 to plan to use nuclear weapons, imminently, against China if the Chinese Communists should attempt to invade the island of Quemoy, occupied by Chiang's troops, a few miles offshore mainland China.<sup>6</sup>

9. • 1959 Berlin Crisis (Nixon-elite)<sup>5</sup>

10. • The Berlin crisis, 1961.<sup>7</sup>

11. • The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962.<sup>8</sup>

12. • Numerous "shows of nuclear force" involving demonstrative deployments or alerts—deliberately visible to adversaries and intended as a "nuclear signal"—of forces with a designated role in U.S. plans for strategic nuclear war.<sup>9</sup>

13. • Much public discussion, in newspapers and in the Senate of (correct) reports that President Johnson had been advised by the JCS of the possible necessity of nuclear weapons to defend marines surrounded at Khe Sanh, Vietnam, 1968.<sup>10</sup>  
*(Info in Johnson...)*

14. • Threats to deter Soviet attack on Chinese nuclear capability, 1969-1970.<sup>6</sup>  
*N+ (Johnson)*

15. • Nixon's secret threats of massive escalation, including possible use of nuclear weapons, conveyed to the North Vietnamese by Henry Kissinger, 1969-72.<sup>11</sup>

Secret alert

*NSA*

15. Threats and nuclear-capable naval deployment in 1971 to deter (according to Nixon) Soviet response to possible Chinese intervention against India in the Indo-Pakistani war, but possibly also, or mainly, to deter India from further military pressure on Pakistan.<sup>7</sup> *probably*  
*(as India need it)*

16. Nixon puts SAC on high alert in October 1973 to deter the Soviets from intervening unilaterally with ground forces to separate the combatants in the Arab-Israeli war, by underscoring U.S. threats to oppose them by force and expressing U.S. willingness to risk escalation to all-out nuclear war.<sup>8</sup>

17. President Ford places nuclear weapons on DEFCON 3 alert on August 19, 1976, in response to "the tree-trimming incident", a fatal skirmish in the DMZ. *A* U.S. show of force threatening possible use of nuclear weapons included flying B-52 bombers "from Guam ominously north up the Yellow Sea on a vector directly to...Pyongyang."<sup>9</sup> *(and see B + C, on orders of force)*

18. "The Carter Doctrine on the Middle East", January 1980, as explained by Defense Secretary Harold Brown, Assistant Secretary of State William Dyess, and other spokesmen,<sup>12</sup> *(see current draft: info?)*

19. Serious White House and JCS consideration, August 1980, of possible imminent use of tactical nuclear weapons if a secret Soviet buildup on the Iranian border led to a Soviet invasion of Iran; followed by expression of explicit nuclear warnings to the Soviet Union.<sup>10</sup> *secret*

20. The Carter Doctrine reaffirmed in essence, including its nuclear component, by President Reagan in January, 1981.<sup>13</sup>

21. Formal threats by the George H.W. Bush administration of possible U.S. nuclear response—preplanned in detail—to various possible "unconscionable actions" by Iraq in Operation Desert Storm, January 1991.<sup>11</sup> *including gas attacks*

22. Explicit, secret threats by the Clinton administration of nuclear use against North Korea in 1995 on their nuclear reactor program (following near-launch of a U.S. conventional attack in 1994).<sup>12</sup>

23. Public warning of a nuclear option by Clinton's Secretary of Defense William Perry against Libya's Tarhuna underground chemical weapons facility in 1996.<sup>13</sup>

24. Presidential warnings by President George W. Bush that nuclear first-use against Iran is "on the table" [allegedly a negotiating table, but the image is of a poker table in the wild, lawless West] if Iran does not meet his demand to cease enriching uranium in its energy program. Widespread leaks of detailed operational planning for short-notice nuclear strikes against Iranian underground sites, and possibly other targets, since 2003-04; alongside authoritative leaks and studies of planning and deployment for vast non-nuclear air attacks on all supporting elements of the Iranian *regime*.

and:  
N+K ?

Notes

1. Gregg Herken, *The Winning Weapon* (New York: Knopf, 1980), pp. 256-74. Richard Betts, *Nuclear Blackmail and Nuclear Balance* (Brookings, 1987) (hereafter, Betts) pp. 23-30.
2. Press Conference, November 30, 1950. Also Truman's memoirs, *Years of Trial and Hope*, Vol. II (New York: Signet, 1965), pp. 450-51. Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), pp. 472-85. (See note 14.) Betts, pp. 31-37.
3. Eisenhower's memoirs, *Mandate for Change*, Vol. I (New York: Doubleday, 1963), pp. 178-81. See also, Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974), pp. 237-41. Betts, pp. 37-47. Nixon
4. Prime Minister Bidault in the film *Hearts and Minds*, and in Roscoe Drummond and Gaston Coblenz, *Duel at the Brink* (New York: Doubleday, 1960), pp. 121-22. Also see, Richard Nixon's memoirs, *RN* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1978), pp. 150-55. Betts, pp. 48-54 (I believe Betts gives too much credence to Dulles' denials of Bidault's account.) equal weight, & that underly,
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6. Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, *Force Without War* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1978), pp. 238, 256.
7. Morton H. Halperin, *The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis: A Documented History* (formerly Top Secret), RAND Corporation Research Memorandum RM-4900-ISA, December 1966. Betts, pp. 68-74.
8. Blechman and Kaplan, *Force Without War*, pp. 343-439. 385
9. R. F. Kennedy, *Thirteen Days* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1971). (See note 14.)
10. Blechman and Kaplan, pp. 47-49, with a table listing nineteen such incidents between November 1946, and the worldwide SAC alert of October 1973. The 1976 alert during the "tree-trimming crisis" in Korea, listed below, could be considered such a show of force.
11. Blechman and Kaplan, pp. 47-49, with a table listing nineteen such incidents between November 1946, and the worldwide SAC alert of October 1973. The 1976 alert during the "tree-trimming crisis" in Korea, listed below, could be considered such a show of force.
12. Herbert Schandler, *The Unmaking of a President* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 86-91. Also see, General Westmoreland's memoirs, *A Soldier Reports* (New York: Doubleday, 1976), p. 338.

(17) ~~11.~~ H.R. Haldeman's memoirs, *The Ends of Power* (New York: Times Books, 1978), pp. 81-85, 97-98; and Richard M. Nixon's memoirs, *RN*, pp. 393-414; and personal interviews with Roger Morris and Eqbal Ahmad. *See Note*.

(18) ~~12.~~ References in text.

~~13. References in text.~~

Immediately after Truman's announcement of U.S. consideration of nuclear weapons in Korea, December 1950, British Prime Minister Atlee flew to Washington, wishing, in Acheson's words, "Britain to be admitted to some participation with us in any future decision to use nuclear weapons," specifically an agreement "that neither of us would use these weapons without prior consultation with the other" (*Present at the Creation*, pp. 478, 484). Like other

<sup>1</sup> *Protest and Survive*, ed. E. P. Thompson and Dan Smith, p. ---

<sup>2</sup> (18) Joshua M. Epstein, *Strategy and Force Planning: The Case of the Persian Gulf*, Brookings, DC, 1987, p. 16, citing Kenneth Waltz, "Strategy for the Rapid Deployment Force," *International Security*, vol. 5 (Spring 1981), p. 64, n.20.

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(5) ~~1~~ Richard K. Betts, *Nuclear Blackmail and Nuclear Balance*, Brookings, pp. 54-62, Dulles' quote on p. 61. See also Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, "U.S. nuclear threats: Then and now," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, September/October 2006, vol. 62, no.5, p. 70.

(6) ~~1~~ <sup>1</sup> Richard Nixon, "A Nation Coming Into Its Own," *Time*, July 29, 1985

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(7) <sup>2</sup> Nixon, *ibid.* 1985. B + K 343-384.

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(13) <sup>3</sup> Nixon, *ibid.* 1985.

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(15) <sup>7</sup> Nixon, *ibid.* 1985

(16) <sup>8</sup> Nixon, *ibid.* 1985

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(17) Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, *op. cit.*, p. 70, quoting Maj. Gen. John K. Singlaub, *Hazardous Duty: An American Soldier in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1991) cited in (and see also) Richard A. Mobley, "Revisiting the Korean Tree-Trimming

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Incident," Summer 2003, pp. 110-111, 113-114. I am indebted to Norris and Kristensen for their references to this incident, the first one known to me (in 2006) involving the brief Ford Administration, which I had earlier listed as a possible exception to the pattern of presidential use of nuclear weapons in crisis. However, it might be more accurate to regard it as a "show of force" like those listed by Blechman and Kaplan (footnote ---) than as a nuclear threat.

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(19) <sup>16</sup> The August 1980 White House discussion is reported by Richard Halloran in the *New York Times*, September 2, 1986, based on interviews and an account of the Secretary of Defense and JCS involvement by Benjamin F. Schemmer: "Was the U.S. Ready to Resort to Nuclear Weapons for the Persian Gulf in 1980?", *Armed Forces Journal International*, September 1986.

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(21) <sup>17</sup> Norris and Kristensen, *op. cit.*, p. 71, and William M. Arkin, "Calculated Ambiguity: Nuclear Weapons and the Gulf War," *Washington Quarterly*, Autumn 1996, Vol. 19, No. 4, p. Both of these provide many more references.

(20) *Ref to cont (Rozan)(coll...)*

(22) <sup>18</sup> Norris and Kristensen, *op. cit.*, p. 70, citing congressional testimony in 1997 before the Senate Armed Services Committee, March 13, 1997 by Gen. Eugene Habiger, commander of the U.S. Strategic Command (Stratcom).

(23) <sup>13</sup> Norris and Kristensen, *op. cit.* Citing Robert Burns, *AP*, "U.S. Libya," April 23, 1996 and "Nuclear Weapons Only Option for USA to Hit Buried Targets," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, May 1, 1996, p. 3. As the latter headline indicates, this episode under Clinton aired the "need" for bunker-buster nuclear weapons against hardened underground sites that might harbor WMDs (or rogue statesmen like Saddam Hussein) that had been publicized in the Gulf War, arose again in the Iraq War, and has since 2004 led to plans for possible nuclear strikes against underground nuclear energy installations in Iran. <sup>14</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>15</sup> the "nuclear option" that ~~the~~ <sup>Bush</sup> president and most Democratic and Republican presidential candidates, including Hillary Clinton, insist must be "on the table," <sup>16</sup> ~~in "negotiating" with Iran.~~

(24) <sup>14</sup> References to come.

<sup>15</sup> For testimony on their beliefs, see the references footnoted above, and also extensive quotations in the footnotes to my 1981 essay, "Call to Mutiny."